

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 12, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 118

Introduced by Assembly Members McCarty, Brown, Burke, Cooper, Gipson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, Ridley-Thomas, Thurmond, and Weber

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Atkins, Baker, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonilla, Bonta, Brough, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Dababneh, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Hadley, Harper, Irwin, Jones, Kim, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, O'Donnell, Olsen, Patterson, Quirk, Rendon, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Ting, Wagner, Wilk, Williams, and Wood)

January 13, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 118—Relative to Black History Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 118, as amended, McCarty. Black History Month.

This measure would recognize February 2016 as Black History Month, urge all citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of African Americans during Black History Month, and encourage the people of California to recognize the many talents, achievements, and contributions that African Americans make to their communities.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, distinguished African
2 American author, editor, publisher, and historian, who is known
3 as the “Father of Black History,” founded Negro History Week in
4 1926, which became Black History Month in 1976, intended to
5 encourage further research and publishing regarding the untold
6 stories of African American heritage; and

7 WHEREAS, The history of African Americans here in the
8 United States, as well as throughout the ages, is indeed unique and
9 vibrant, and it is appropriate to celebrate this history during the
10 month of February 2016, which has been proclaimed as Black
11 History Month; and

12 WHEREAS, There is even greater cause for reverent celebration
13 in 2016 as Americans reflect on the significance of the 150th
14 anniversary of the proposal of the Fourteenth Amendment to the
15 United States Constitution, which granted due process and equal
16 protection under the law to all citizens, and at the same time
17 granted citizenship to African Americans; and

18 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is rich with
19 inspirational stories of great men and noble women whose actions,
20 words, and achievements have united Americans and contributed
21 to the success and prosperity of the United States; and

22 WHEREAS, The slave trade was a tragic episode in African
23 history and began before August 1619 when the first slaves arrived
24 in Jamestown, Virginia. During the course of the slave trade, an
25 estimated 50 million African men, women, and children were lost
26 to their native continent, though only about 15 million arrived
27 safely to a new home. The others lost their lives on African soil
28 or along the Guinea coast, or finally in holds on the ships during
29 the dreaded Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean; and

30 WHEREAS, The first American to shed blood in the revolution
31 that freed America from British rule was Crispus Attucks (March
32 5, 1770, Boston Massacre), an African American seaman and slave.
33 African Americans also fought in wars including the Battles of
34 Lexington and Concord in April 1775, the Battle of Rhode Island
35 on August 29, 1778, the battles of Ticonderoga, White Plains,
36 Bennington, Brandywine, Saratoga, Savannah, Yorktown, Bunker
37 Hill, and other revolutionary war battles; the War of 1812,
38 including the Battle of New Orleans; the Civil War, the
39 Spanish-American War; World Wars I and II, Korea, and the
40 Vietnam War; and

1 WHEREAS, In spite of the African slave trade, many Africans
2 and African Americans continued to move forward in society;
3 during the Reconstruction period, two African Americans served
4 in the United States Senate and 14 sat in the House of
5 Representatives; and

6 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of the United States, the
7 course of its history has been greatly influenced by Black heroes
8 and pioneers in many diverse areas, from science, medicine,
9 business, and education to government, industry, and social
10 leadership; and

11 WHEREAS, Africans and African Americans have also been
12 great inventors, inventing and improving things such as the
13 air-conditioning unit, almanac, automatic gearshift, blood plasma
14 bag, clothes dryer, doorknob, doorstop, electric lamp bulb, elevator,
15 fire escape ladder, fountain pen, gas mask, golf tee, horseshoe,
16 lantern, lawnmower, lawn sprinkler, lock, lubricating cup,
17 refrigerating apparatus, spark plug, stethoscope, telephone
18 transmitter, thermostat control, traffic signal, and typewriter; and

19 WHEREAS, A number of these brave and accomplished
20 individuals, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington
21 Carver, Matthew Henson, Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Charles Drew,
22 Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Curt Flood, Medgar Evers, and,
23 of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are noted prominently in
24 the history books of students nationwide, thus enabling them to
25 learn about the important and lasting contributions of these
26 individuals; and

27 WHEREAS, Among those Americans who have enriched our
28 society are the members of the African American
29 community—individuals who have been steadfast in their
30 commitment to promoting brotherhood, equality, and justice for
31 all; now, therefore, be it

32 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
33 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature takes great pleasure in
34 recognizing February 2016 as Black History Month, urges all
35 citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of African
36 Americans during Black History Month, and encourages the people
37 of California to recognize the many talents, achievements, and
38 contributions that African Americans make to their communities;
39 and be it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 2 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.